

Shashi Ranjan- **Total marks 148/250**

Essay-1 (For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, the mind is greatest enemy.) Marks given – 76/125

Namaste Shashi,

1) Beautiful essay Shashi, it keeps reader engaged. You have a really beautiful way of writing. With very simple language you have unfolded many aspects of the topic. You have also given good references. It keeps going better and better.

2) You have given excellent opening to the essay. As you should know, the topic is from 6th Adhyay of Bhagwat Geeta. Your opening and the way you have explained that opening is very impressive.

3) You have incorporated almost all aspects of topic however I feel you have not given much details to the other dimension (which is ‘for those who fail to conquer the mind, mind is enemy’). You should give more examples for this dimension.

Here are few suggestions regarding more dimensions:

Mind as a friend: -

- a) Source of creativity, innovation, inspiration, imagination
- b) The mind is a reflection of our true self or soul, which is eternal, blissful, and pure. By controlling the mind, we can realize our true nature and attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death.
- c) The mind is a bridge between the material and the spiritual realms.

Mind as an enemy: -

- a) The mind is often influenced by ignorance, illusion, egoism, attachment, aversion, fear, anger, greed, lust, envy, etc.
- b) The mind is often restless, agitated, distracted, confused, and doubtful. These are the obstacles of the mind that prevent concentration and clarity.
- c) The mind is often enslaved by habits, patterns, conditioning, expectations, etc. These are the limitations of the mind that restrict freedom and growth.

As the topic states “For him who has conquered the mind”, you can explore feminism dimension here.

4) You have closed your essay really well. As a literary piece also, this essay is wonderful. And delight to read. It makes me keep reading.

Excellent job Shashi!

Essay-2 (Taking pride in our own optimism that “science will find a way out” is foolish) Marks given – 72/125

Remarks: -

1) Very well written essay. very apt examples and really good articulation. As conveyed in the earlier essay. You have a natural flow in your essay. It makes reader stick to your essay. You should definitely nurture this skill.

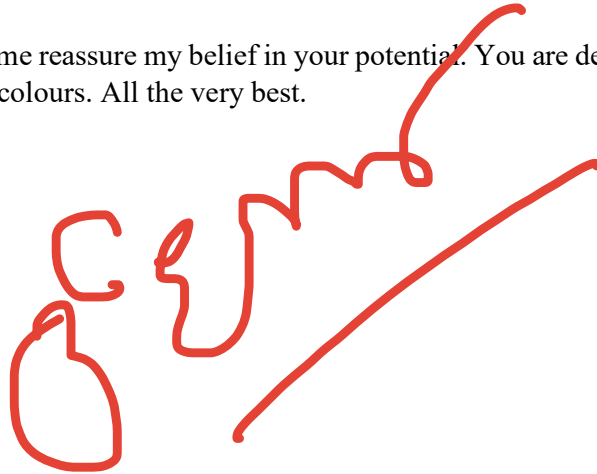
2) Your opening to this essay is surprisingly not up to the standards set by you. We expect nothing short of excellence from you. So, think about this. But your closing of this essay again is excellent.

3) You have structured your essay really well. You have given very apt examples. And also substantiated it with quotes, data etc. which is an excellent quality to have.

You have really understood the topic. This topic revolves around scientific optimism and its contributions to humanities and also demerits of over-reliance on science. You have touched on all these parameters yet you have not given enough explanation of these topics. Your way of writing historical evolution of scientific optimism is excellent.

You could have used the example of 'Green Revolution.' It has its own benefits but it also has given rise to newer problems. This could have been an excellent example to connect both boon and bane of science.

Excellent, Shashi. Your essay makes me reassure my belief in your potential. You are definitely going to clear this exam with flying colours. All the very best.

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Sashi', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.



Chanakya
Mandal
Pariwar

SHASHI RANJAN SINGH

7th August 2023

UPSC Roll No. 4911613

Student's Name : _____

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Main Exam Roll Number : _____

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UPSC Mains 2023 Test Series

ROUND II

ESSAY - 2

Time : 3 Hrs. & Marks : 250

Question Paper specific instructions

(Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting the questions)

- The essay must be written in the medium authorized in the Admission Certificate which must be stated clearly on the cover of this Question-cum-answer (QCA) Booklet in the space provided. No marks will be given written in medium other than the authorized one.
- Word Limit, as specified, should be adhered to.
- Any page or portion of the page left blank in Question-cum-Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.
- Write two essays, choosing one topic from each of the following Sections A and B, in about 1000-1200 words each. **125 x 2 = 250**

SECTION : A

1. All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds then to understanding and ends with reason. There is nothing higher than reason.
2. Many have described the society. Task is to change it.
3. The modernity of yesterday is the tradition of today, and the modernity of today will be tradition tomorrow.
4. For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, the mind is the greatest enemy.

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④

"FOR HIM WHO HAS CONQUERED THE MIND,
THE MIND IS THE BEST OF FRIENDS, BUT
FOR ONE WHO HAS FAILED TO DO SO, THE
MIND IS THE GREATEST ENEMY."

Excellent Opening!

We all must have seen the famous depiction of a scene from the epic battle of Mahabharata, where Arjuna is seated in a chariot that is being pulled by four horses and the charioteer is the Lord Krishna himself.

Many thinkers and philosophers believe that this picture in itself is the essence of all philosophy to guide individual towards a good life. Here, the four horses resemble the different desires

Great Example.

that human beings encounter and may often get swayed by it owing to sensory impulses. However when Arjuna (self) gives the control of the chariot (body) to Lord Krishna (consciousness), our life gets a control on the desires and give ourselves a positive direction.

(Aptly articulated.)

✓ To control one's direction in life, one has to control his mind. But then the question arises — as to why do we need to control our minds? A modern monk turned author Jay Shetty in his famous book "Think like a Monk" has answered this question. He explains it through the concept of a "Monkey Mind".

This analogy of mind is like Monkey is given by Gautam Buddha. he calls it as 'kapichitta.' Buddha said that there are five aggregates that constitute the mind: form, feeling, perception, mental formations, and consciousness. You can also explore this dimension while defining/ explaining what mind is or what constitute mind in this essay.

think of Patanjali also

Human mind is restless. At any given point of time, though thousands of thoughts pass through it moving from one thought to another. Sometimes, it "appears" → v. good that we have no control over what comes to our mind and we are just servants of our mind, performing its wish. Because of the above, we are pulled in different directions, unable to accomplish anything significant.

Hence it becomes very essential that one conquers his mind to be able to focus on other essentials of life. This leads us to a question - as to why so much emphasis is being placed on the

Gandhiji has quoted this. "A human being is product of his thought. what he thinks, he becomes."

conquest of one's own mind? The answer to it is very simple. A human being is product of his thoughts, values, words and actions. Our actions flow from our thoughts. The thoughts are the root and our character, career, relationships, etc are the fruit.

Therefore, one should go for deliberate and conscious cultivation of the mind. This has been highlighted by many motivational speakers and writers like James Allen in his book "As a Man Thinketh".

→ very good example.

He says, "A man is but ~~sum~~ sum total of his thoughts." In similar line Robin

Sharma, the author of "The Monk who

Sold his Ferrari writes that human
mind is like a garden. We need to deliberately
think of the flowers we need to grow, nurture
them, clear the weeds so that our mind
remains a healthy place and does not
turn out to be our own enemy.

Good

But better said than done, it is
easy to win over others, win wars and prove
oneself in competitive examinations, but it
is very difficult to win over oneself. The
journey of conquest should begin with one's
own mind. If mind is out of control,
we feel puzzled, disorganised and
confused. Easy things become a burden.
Over time anxiety, depression and negativity

v.
good

creeps in, we may miss a chance to be the best versions of our self to realize our fullest potential.

There are various examples to establish this fact regarding people who could conquer their minds and people who failed to do so. Gautam Buddha, Swami Vivekananda, George Washington, Albert Einstein have made the world so beautiful because they could hold on to their impulses and focus on the goodness and greatness in humanity.

→ Good Example

On the other hand men who were in control of the whims and fancies of their minds like Adolf Hitler, Robert J.

Did Hitler really realize later? It is at best one of the theories that he did regret but we can definitely say that for sure,

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Oppenheimer, Harshad Mehta realized very late that they could have better contributed to the world's prosperity and peace had they initially not fallen for their impulses. What could have been their best friend, became their worst of enemy.

one's mind can become one's best friend because it helps as a guide, an unconditional support system, a solver of ethical dilemmas and a conscience-keeper.

very good.

if we do anything wrong, the mind causes cognitive dissonance. if helps one to be on path of morality, it becomes an instrument of individual progress and

You can explain this term, 'Cognitive Dissonance.' a little more.

societal development.

It also becomes the greatest enemy if we fail to ~~stem it~~. control it.

Taking lessons from the Mahabharata,

the irreparability and arrogance of

Duryodhana led to his decline. He did not

even give 5 villages to the Pandavas to avoid

the Dharmayudha. He was so steeped in

his pride and overconfidence that he

tried to detain the "supreme embodiment

of world's consciousness" Lord Krishna.

It is not surprise that Rashtra-

Kavi Ramdhari Singh "Dinkar" wrote that

"jab vinash manuj par chhata hai, pehle

vivek mar jaata hai". It means that when

(very good example. Very apt.)

(10)
a person's end is near, the first
thing that leaves him is his "wisdom"
or the ability to think, reason and rationally.

The failure to control one's mind leads
to destruction of life.

closer to the present times, we
see a dichotomy between people's perceptions,
while they focus on their physical health
they do not give adequate attention to their
mental health. Especially in India—

as per the world health organisation, at

→ least 15% of Indian population suffers

from a mental health disorder. WHO

calls India as the "most depressed

country in the world". This is the collective

you should quote exact data for these facts. for example, this was a report by WHO in 2017. Also, National Mental Health Survey in 2015 reported the same figure.

enemy of our nation India has a whole. we have been a land, where the greatest minds of the world has been born — Aryabhata, Sushruta, Patanjali and Bharata Muni to name a few. we have been a "vishwa guru" in the past and we strive to be a "knowledge economy" and the moral voice of the world in current times

very good.

For that our citizens have to conquer their minds and use it to the betterment of society. Indian cricketer, Yuvraj Singh, who fought a deadly cancer to win for India the 2011 cricket world cup says that — it was not the physical pain that troubled him, but the mental

Again excellent example.
(10)

strength which created positivity and
reemphered his will to play for India one day
again that resulted in his tremendous
recovery.

As per Mahatma Gandhi, "courage is
not physical capacity, but the indomitable

will". The human mind has the capacity
to attain godliness. The realisation of god
is the highest attainment of self. This friend
of ours can help us realise the presence
of God within us (Aham Brahmasmi).

It is just that we need to cultivate it with
positive thoughts and act accordingly. It has
to be our constant companion. It is a
source of strength. No goal would appear
difficult, if we first conquer our mind.

Good

very
good

You should have elaborated on failure to conquer the mind more. You have used only 2 paragraphs for that. even though your articulation is good. failure to meet the demands of the answer will leave you with less marks.

On the contrary, failure to do so would result in not only loss of our dreams and aspirations, but also our morality and values, ultimately our civilisation and humanity.

Let us decide to be the master of our minds and not its slaves. To discipline our minds so that we realise our higher self and make our nation great and the world a better place. The vision highlighted by Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore — wonderful

"where the mind is without fear, & the head is held high... into that heaven of freedom. let my country awake".

is ours to achieve.

76
125

Excellent closing of an essay.

SECTION : B

1. When carnage is reduced to numbers and development to just economic growth, real human beings and their tragedies remain forgotten.
2. Data is new oil.
3. Taking pride in our own optimism that “science will find a way out” is foolish.
4. In international relation there are no permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests.

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3

TAKING PRIDE IN OUR OWN OPTIMISM
THAT "SCIENCE WILL FIND A WAY
OUT" IS FOOLISH

very good opening but we expect much more from you.

It is said that the current age is the age of science and leaders world over are trying to establish knowledge-economies based on principles of science and technology. For the past five centuries, science has become the hegemonic discourse and it influences almost every aspect of human existence. This began with the Renaissance movement and industrial revolution in nations of Europe..

However, our emphasis on the "scientific way of life" was not thought of

Good explanation of historical evolution of scientific optimism.

ease. In the western world; in ancient times, ethics and philosophy dominated the choices of economic, social and political decision making. Later in medieval times, all aspects of life came

under the overarching influence of religion. **(not same as Dvaita)** when religion could not find solutions

to all the questions of a good life - the reformation movement established science as the new way of life.

Those were the times of regret and it was believed that the values of humanism as manifested in form of industrialisation, secularism, rationalism, etc riding on back of scientific advances will create a

prosperous world. Since, then for the next few decades the instrument of science did play its role and humanity progressed at incremental pace. This also led to over-emphasis and over-reliance on science along with optimism.

Every other religion? or you mean every other western religion?

The impact was so much so that every other religion & its preachers came forward to prove that how their religion was closest to science. Also, the principles of ethics were based now on principles of science — utilitarian theory of Jeremy Bentham. (That action is right which manifests itself into the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest number.)

→ Good example

You can also state how Hitler and Mussolini tried to prove their ideologies as scientific. They tried to use social Darwinism to support their theories.

Across disciplines there was shift from norms, values, ideas towards facts, data, information, etc. slowly slowly the way of life transformed. There were numerous scientific inventions and discoveries like steam engine, telegraphy, airplane, spacecraft, wireless connectivity, etc. that made life comfortable. Our life had not been this easier if not for the electricity, air conditioners, refrigerators, wireless handsets and so on. This reinforced our optimism in science.

In the recent COVID-19 pandemic, it was the scientific community that sprung into action on detection of the virus with

You can also mention about 'Green Revolution' here. And then same example can be given about perils of scientific optimism.

multitude of efforts. Elaborate genome sequencing, clinical trials of vaccine, mass production of PPE kits, masks, sanitizers and vaccines helped us to tide over the deadly "once in a century" crisis. Hence, it is logical & rational to rely on science for our solutions. ✓

However, since our world is multidimensional and our problems are multi-dimensional, we must also look beyond science across spectrum of disciplines for better solutions to the problems of humanity. As societies moved from emphasis on philosophy to religion to science, there are chances that a better world can be created looking beyond

the meta-narrative of science.

This was highlighted by the great American activist Martin Luther King.

Dr. who quoted "Our scientific power has
outrun our spiritual power. We have guided
missiles but misguided men". He was pointing

towards the negative aspects of science that
we see today. arms race, nuclear threat

designer babies, threat to online privacy,
cyber security, etc. They all also arose

because of scientific progress, but pose a
serious threat to humanity.

science cannot be solution to
all our problems and we need to be
balanced in our optimism. A prime example
of the same is the current climate crisis.

More emphasis on climate change is needed here.

very
good.

Our society is more advanced scientifically than any other phase of human existence, but still face the worst pollution and environmental degradation. It is falsely believed that technological transfer, moving towards renewable energy, sustainable farming, etc. will solve the crisis. However, despite all the above there is no end to the ~~mean~~ menace of global warming.

The reason being we need a change in value system & not scientific upgradation. We need to change the model of development. We need to start living an environmentally conscious lifestyle. This has also been highlighted by our present Prime Minister Shri. Narendra Modi through the MISSION

✓
good

very good that you have quoted mission LIFE.

LIFE (Lifestyle for Environment)

misra. For centuries in dhan society has been living in harmony with nature & practicing the principle of minimalism. This is the true approach to life rather than the western model of consumerism.

It indeed appears foolish that humans are so proud of their scientific achievements. Science is an instrument to serve humanity and thus, science is not an end in itself. To be truly optimistic, our scientific rationality should be clad with ethical values.

Science in politics may help us understand the political phenomena better, but we need an ethical approach to

You need to elaborate on science in politics more.

choose candidates objectively. Use of science in society may help us know about various castes, religion, race, language, etc but only a developmental and compassionate mindset can create a "unity and diversity", on the principles of plurality, harmony and pluralism.

toleration

Similarly, in the domain of technology, we talk about responsible AI (Artificial intelligence), code of ethics of significant social media intermediaries, removal of stereotypes ~~from~~ from big data & machine learning tools.

It is not just science where people can find solace. The field of humanities,

they too

arts and craft — like singing, dancing,
painting, literature, etc also have solutions
for many problems. South Indian actress

are
scient

sai Pallavi Senthamarai spoke about the
fact that whenever she faces stress, anxiety,
she keeps on dancing till she finds her peace

Very
good
example

and comfort. The pursuit of art has itself
made the world better and its importance
has been highlighted by UNESCO — as a tool of
unity and cooperation.

Hence, we must shed our over-reliance
on science and stop seeing the world only
through the prism of black & white science.
if there is objectivity in the world, there is
subjectivity too. We need all the disciplines, be

You need to give one or two more sentences on this. "Where there is objectivity, there is subjectivity."

of philosophy, science, humanities, etc. We should not remain foolish to rely on just one, when we have so many approaches,

science should be human-rationality and not instrumental rationality,

Good

while it has made the world better and modern, we need to make it more ethical and compassionate. This is to be done so that

all our quests are answered, we become complete human beings. This was highlighted

by Swami Vivekananda when he quoted

"The quest for truth in the outside world

is science, while the quest for truth

within is spirituality."

very aptly written.

Science has given us the reason to be optimistic through its objective evidence.

based and value-neutral solutions to
multipitude of human problems, we need to
add to it the element of compassion.
As per Buddha, compassion is the foundational
stone of righteousness, it is said in science
 $1+1=2$, but in compassion $1+1=1$.

wonderfully
written.

This is also the genesis of
our ancient Indian wisdom of "vasudhaiva
kutumbakam" & "sanatana dharma". we are

not just part of one family, but also we
all are part of the same universal soul.

Let's decide to stand by science and morality
together to attain the most cherished
vision of "one Earth, one family, one future"
for all of humanity.

Excellent closing.

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125

Space for Rough Work

Space for Rough Work



Chanakya Mandal Pariwar

Essay



Time : 3 Hrs.

Marks : 250

Section A

1. All our knowledge begins with the senses, proceeds then to understanding and ends with reason. There is nothing higher than reason.
2. Many have described the society. Task is to change it.
3. The modernity of yesterday is the tradition of today, and the modernity of today will be tradition tomorrow.
4. For him who has conquered the mind, the mind is the best of friends; but for one who has failed to do so, the mind is the greatest enemy.

Section B

1. When carnage is reduced to numbers and development to just economic growth, real human beings and their tragedies remain forgotten.
2. Data is new oil.
3. Taking pride in our own optimism that "science will find a way out" is foolish.
4. In international relation there are no permanent friends or permanent enemies, only permanent interests.